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SECURITY INFORMATION

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
OFFICE OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES

29 September 1952

STAFF MEMORANDUM NO. 275

SUBJECT: Revision suggested by [REDACTED] 25X1A9a

NOTE : Since I may be away when S.M. No. 275 is discussed, and since I favor drastic revision of the Memo, I venture to suggest the following revision. I feel very strongly that the present paragraph 3 should not be included.

SUGGESTED DRAFT

1. The author of this paper reaches the conclusion that while Soviet Russia is "planning a war", the Kremlin will probably not deliberately precipitate general war during the next decade if the Western powers preserve a firm policy and adequate defense. The author believes that an outbreak of major conflict during this period is unlikely, and he indicates that, consequently, the tempo of Western rearmament should be set with more concern for the long-term economic stability of the West.

2. We agree that the Kremlin probably will not deliberately initiate general war in the near future, though we are unable to extend this estimate to cover a decade. We believe, however, that

there is a continuing danger of general war resulting from a

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Kremlin action or series of actions not intended to have that result, or from actions which, in the Kremlin's view, entail the risk but not the certainty of war. We cannot agree that general war is improbable simply because the Kremlin is unlikely deliberately to initiate it.

3. With respect to the correct tempo of Western rearmament we would observe that the Kremlin has open to it many aggressive courses of action short of a deliberate initiation of general war. We believe that the Kremlin's decision to adopt, or not to adopt, an aggressive course of action will be influenced and possibly determined by the degree of military readiness of the West. Hence the tempo of Western rearmament cannot be made to depend wholly on an estimate of Kremlin intentions respecting general war.

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